GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1863
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2017
Decline in Forest Cover
Singh Shri Abhishek

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that forest cover of many States has declined in the last few years and if so, the corrective action taken thereon;
(b) whether the data of forest cover since independence is available with the Government and if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
(c) the details of the steps been taken by the Government to conserve and protect forest cover in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, a subordinate organization under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has been carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially. The findings of the assessment are published in India State of Forest Report. The latest report in the series is India State of Forest Report 2015. As per this report, the total forest cover of the country is 7, 01,673 square kilometers which is 21.34% of the total geographical area of the country. Some States have shown increase in forest cover whereas in some States the forest cover has shown as decline. However, there is a net increase of 3775 square kilometers in the forest cover of the country as compared with India State of Forest Report-2013. The detailed list showing forest cover and change in forest cover States/UTs wise is given in Annexure.

(b) Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun has been carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country using remote sensing technology since 1987 biennially. So far, 14 Reports have been published. However, the forest cover based on the remote sensing data is not available prior to 1987.

(c) To increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programme is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP),
Green India Mission (GIM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) which from 2015-16 has been amalgamated as the Watershed Development Component of the "Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)" and under Compensatory

Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the Ministry of Environment & Forests is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for afforestation and tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas through people's participation in the country. The scheme is being implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development agency (SFDA) at State Level, Forest Development agency (FDA) at Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at Village level.

The Ministry also provides Grants-in-aid to the States/ Union Territories Governments for protection and management of forests under Intensification of Forest Management Scheme (IFMS). The aim of the scheme is to supplement the efforts of the States and Union Territories towards protection and management of forests. The Funds under the scheme are utilized for purchase of vehicles for patrolling of the forests, establishment of camps, watch towers for detection and monitoring of forest fires, creation and maintenance of fire lines, survey and demarcation of forest areas and strengthening forest infrastructure etc.

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